

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action dated October 6, 2004, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of claims 18-20. The allowance of claims 4, 5 and 28-30 is noted with appreciation.

Claim 18 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103, as being unpatentable over a combination of four references, namely the Hamamura et al published U.S. application, in view of the Kodama Japanese published application, and the Ohta et al and Nakagawa U.S. patents. While it is respectfully submitted that a person of ordinary skill in the art would not be motivated to combine four different references in the manner set forth in the Office Action, to advance prosecution claim 18 has been amended to further clarify the distinctions over the prior art represented by these references. More specifically, claim 18 recites a general flow of operation, in which the number of images which are to be subsequently composited is first determined. Before the composition of images occurs, the image data of each of the images is compressed, and the compression ratio is based upon the calculated number of images being taken. The compressed images are temporarily stored in a memory. When all of the images have been taken and stored, a composite image is formed by reading the image data from the memory.

It is respectfully submitted that the applied references, whether considered individually or together, do not suggest the combination of elements set forth in claim 18. The Nakagawa patent discloses a relationship between the number of images taken and a compression ratio (an amount of code data) when a plurality of images are taken. However, it does not suggest that images that are to be subsequently composited are compressed and temporarily stored before the compositing

operation. Nor does it disclose the formation of a composite image by reading a plurality of images from the memory and further processing them to form the composite. Furthermore, it is respectfully submitted that the other applied references do not suggest such operations.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 18 is respectfully requested.

Claims 19 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over the Kodama published Japanese application in view of the Nakagawa patent. In reply to Applicants' previous response, the most recent Office Action states that the term "standard image data" is being interpreted to mean the final composited image data. To preclude such an interpretation, claim 19 has been amended to clarify the meaning of "standard image" within the context of the invention. More particularly, the claim is directed to a camera system for memorizing image data of a plurality of images. Within this plurality of images, one image is selected as the standard image. The image data for the plurality of images, except this standard image, is compressed, and both the standard image data and the compressed image data are temporarily stored in a memory region. The compression is carried out according to a condition that existed when the image data was taken.

It is respectfully submitted that the Kodama reference does not disclose this claimed subject matter. In particular, it does not disclose that, from among a plurality of images, one of the images is selected as a standard image, the image data for all of the other images is compressed, and the compressed image data is stored together with the image data for the standard image.


In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that claim 19, as well as dependent claim 20, are patentably distinct from the Kodama reference, whether considered by itself or in combination with the Nakagawa patent.

For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all pending claims are patentably distinct from the prior art of record. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

BURNS, DOANE, SWECKER & MATHIS, L.L.P.

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By: 
James A. LaBarre
Registration No. 28,632

P.O. Box 1404
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1404
(703) 836-6620